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"To produce this favourite *unanimity* in delusion, and to prevent all possibility of a return to our ancient happy state, arguments for our continuance in this course, are drawn from the wretched situation itself, into which we have been betrayed. It is said, that, whatever our sentiments may have been before, all the policy we have left, is to strengthen the hands of government. On the principle of this argument, *the more mischiefs we suffer from any Administration, the more our trust in it is to be confirmed.* Let them but once get us into a war, and then their power is safe, and an act of oblivion past for all their misconduct."—BURKE.

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LETTER V.

TO R. B. SHERIDAN, ESQ. M. P.

SIR,—When you were about to take leave of your "kind friends," at the close of the last season, you exhorted them to union, harmony, and *silence*, till the House opened again. "Let all discussion," said you, "be confined within these walls. Let gentlemen leave all their party-feelings behind them, as they sometimes leave their hats upon the benches, to keep their places, during those short absences, which their necessities sometimes occasion."—Here your newspaper friends say, "there was a loud cry of, *hear! hear! hear!*" A mark of approbation, in which I might, probably, have joined, had you not, even at the very moment that you were thus inculcating forbearance, thrown out a challenge, of which it would have been, in me, a shameful neglect of duty not to accept. This challenge, which was very full and explicit, extended to every point, relative to the constancy and consistency of your public character and conduct, into which, therefore, it is now my intention to examine.

But, Sir, before I proceed further on the subject of this letter, it seems necessary to make an observation or two on an article, which has been published by one of your newspaper friends, by way of comment on my last. This writer states, that "some persons are making an attempt to show, that Mr. Sheridan has ever" [read *always*] "worshiped success and censured failure; that he reviled Buonaparté at Acre, but praised him at Marengo." What "persons" besides myself have made "an attempt to show" this, I know not. I have not only attempted to show it, but I have actually shown it; and, now let us see, Sir, what this your defender has said, to do away my statements. He tells us, that, "when the mutiny was triumphant at Spithead, when the whole country was appalled, when the government trembled, and ministers were preparing hastily to resign, when the members of the late Parliament (to their shame and disgrace be it spoken) seemed

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"afraid of attending their duty, the House being remarkably thin on the most important measures respecting the mutineers; at this time, when *all was gloom and despair*, Mr. SHERIDAN, forgetting his party attachments, stood forth, *almost alone*, in the House of Commons, to prop up and animate the ministers, sinking under the weight of calamity by which they were oppressed. Mr. Sheridan has ever since been *blamed by his party* for this conduct. They say, had he not supported ministers on that occasion, they must have *resigned* their places to the old Opposition. It is well known Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas had *actually taken steps towards doing so*; but that the consequences of Mr. Sheridan's support made them hesitate, and ultimately remain. Even Mr. Windham *trembled for his safety*, and was preparing to relinquish the loaves and fishes, *much as he loves them*, while Mr. Sheridan zealously stood forth in the face of danger, and committed himself against a rebellion, which it was *thought would triumph over the government!!!!*"—Indeed, I cannot tell, Sir; the situation of the country may, for aught I know, have been desperate enough; but, I will venture to say, that it never was a thousandth part so desperate as that of the man, who can think of having recourse to means like these of defending his reputation. But, leaving these modest pretensions to make their way amongst your Volunteers; admitting, for argument's sake, that the ministry trembled, that Messrs. Pitt and Dundas were preparing hastily to resign, that they had actually taken steps for doing so, and that even Mr. Windham trembled for his safety and was about to relinquish those loaves and fishes, of which he is so remarkably fond; admitting that your support prevented the flight of these three miserable chicken-hearted men, whom you covered with your shield, and saved from ruin and ignominy; admitting that all the other members of the Parliament were, to their shame and disgrace, afraid to

attend their duty, and that the old Opposition sought, in that awful moment, the gratification of their own interests at the expense of their country's tranquillity, and even at the risk of their Sovereign's life; admitting that "the whole country was appalled," that Ministry, Opposition, Parliament, People, and Army, that all, all were knaves, fools, rebels, or cowards, and that there was only YOU, in the whole kingdom, who retained your cool senses, and who was still honest, wise, loyal, and brave; admitting all this, and that is certainly admitting a great deal, yet my accusation against you remains completely unanswered, and even unobjected to. Your friend says, that I am "making an attempt" to show, that you have always worshipped success and "censured failure, that "you reviled Buonaparté at Acre and praised him at Marengo." Very true! And what has your conduct, during the mutiny, in 1797, to do with this? I have before (p. 385 and 386) given an opinion not very favourable to that conduct; but, were I to admit that you then acted from motives perfectly laudable, an admission which I shall never make, how does this operate against my "attempt" to show, that you reviled Buonaparté in the days of his adversity, and loaded him with the most fulsome praises in the days of his prosperity? Not only have I attempted to show, but, as I before observed, I have really *shown*, that your "true English feeling" depends entirely upon times and seasons: I have, from your own mouth, produced proof, incontrovertible proof, of your versatility; and not only of versatility, but of versatility arising from some of the worst motives, by which a public man can possibly be actuated.* Unless, therefore, you have something to offer, either against the authenticity of my documents, or against the conclusions which I have drawn from them; unless you are able to demolish my arguments, or, which is much easier, to eat your own words, my accusation will, in the opinion of all men of sense, remain unimpaired. Your praise of Buonaparté, after the battle of Marengo, must not be, as you would have it ascribed to a momentary delusion: that which I have cited was not a solitary instance, a mere rally of that "true English feeling," which has obtained you so much fame amongst the shop-keeping politicians: no, his praise was your *constant* theme: it was introduced upon every occasion, where you could possibly introduce it

without being certain of a call to order. So far did you carry your efforts to defend his character, that you adverted to things said out of Parliament as well as in Parliament, of the former of which there was a remarkable instance, when, in speaking of the intercepted French letters, published by order of government, you said you had read the preface *with horror*, and you called in question the *authenticity* of the letters themselves. "Amongst other things," said you, "these letters assert, that MONSIEUR TALLEN *lost an eye*; though, I believe, gentlemen may soon be convinced, that that gentleman has two as *fine eyes* as any man in this country:"* upon which passage of your speech the reporter observes, that MR. TALLEN *was in the gallery, while you were speaking!* But, the full heat of your zeal is not felt here, till it is known, that there was *no such assertion in the intercepted letters*; and, the public should be informed, that the bookseller, fearing your statement might tend to injure the reputation of the work, as a collection of authentic documents, wrote you a very respectful letter, informing you of your error, and requesting you to take some opportunity of correcting it in the same public manner in which it had been committed, a request, however, to which you never paid the least possible attention. Of so little consequence were both truth and justice, when put in competition with your desire to discredit those documents, without the help of which the world could never have had but a very imperfect notion of the character and deeds of Buonaparté!—These, Sir, and such as these, are the facts, which you have to do away. It is useless to set on your typographical friends to abuse *me*; to impute my writings to party-spirit, to call me factious, disloyal, or interested: those who know me will, you may be assured, believe nothing of this; and, those who do not, will look only at my statements and my reasoning, with which my motives have no more to do than your conduct at the time of the mutiny, in 1797, has to do with the eulogium, which you pronounced on Buonaparté in 1800, *after he had massacred the people of Alexandria; after he had murdered his prisoners of war; after he had poisoned his sick soldiers; after he had deserted his army, and after he had denied his God.*—Having, however, been led, and even forced, back to the pretensions, which you set up on account of the *tope* that you took while the fleet was in a very critical situation, I

* Speech, 27th March, 1801.

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shall, before I quit the subject entirely, just remind you of the sentiments, you very recently expressed, with respect to the conduct of the *Army*, on that memorable occasion. I allude to your observations on a part of the speech of Colonel Craufurd, during the debate on the famous Vote of Thanks. You had, in moving the Vote, seized on one of those opportunities, which you have seldom missed, of exciting suspicion against the *Army*. You had requested the House to recollect, that the monarchy of France was overset in consequence of the defection of the regular army; from which it was impossible to draw any other conclusion, than that the British army might, in similar circumstances, act the same cowardly and perfidious part. Colonel Craufurd, in repelling this insinuation, might have denied your premises: he might have reminded the House, that the army of France remained faithful to their king, till after the monarchy was, in fact, overthrown, and till after they had been placed under the command of generals appointed by the National Assembly; he might have observed, that it was amongst the Volunteers where the defection begun; that it was with them, that the base, bloody, insolent, and cowardly Citizen Fayette hunted the Royal Family from place to place, led them prisoners to their capital, and rendered their palace a jail, where he guarded them like malefactors; that it was a *member of a Volunteer Corps*, who, when the Royal Family were led captive to Paris, carried, by way of trophy, in front of the cavalcade, a head which had just before been severed from the body, and the blood of which was yet dripping upon the bearer, and this head was, too, that of a *regular soldier*, who had been murdered in defending the apartments of the Queen against the attempts of the disloyal and dastardly Volunteers of Paris. The Colonel might further have observed, that on the 10th of August, 1792, the day on which the King was formally dethroned, the part of the army that remained near him was still faithful, and that, it was the Citizen-soldiers, the Volunteer-corps, who murdered, in the most cowardly manner, the guards at the Tuilleries, and who would have plunged their bayonets into the hearts of their Sovereign, his Royal Consort, and their children, had not the deed been prevented by an escape to the regicide assembly. Of all this Colonel Craufurd might have reminded the House; and, he might have reminded them, too, that, if there never had been any National Guards, that is to say, Citizen-sol-

diers, Volunteer-corps, men governed by committees, mixing debate with military service; he might safely have asserted, that, if there never had been any of these, the Bourbons would never have been dethroned, the Church would not have been pillaged, the titles of nobility would not have been abolished, and property, of every description, would not have changed hands: he might have warned the House against the danger they were about to create, against the unmanageable monster, whom they were about to arm with teeth and with claws; he might easily have predicted what has already come to pass, and might have anticipated the day, when, like the agitators of Cromwell, these self-created military committees might possibly give law to the Parliament itself. From this sort of reply Colonel Craufurd refrained; but, in answer to your insinuation, he did remind the House of the meritorious conduct of the army, during the mutiny in the fleet, when, in spite of all the temptations of the seditious societies (not excepting the "friends of the people,") they, to a man, remained faithful and obedient, and when to their fidelity and bravery, more than to any other immediate cause, his Majesty owed the preservation of his throne and the nation that of its liberty and happiness. One would have thought, that the stating of a circumstance, which was so honourable to the army, and the truth of which was universally acknowledged, might have been suffered to pass uncensured, particularly by you, whose *whole public merit is now made to rest upon the part which YOU took against the mutineers!* But, no: as if the just commendation of the army encroached upon that exclusive claim, which you made to the act of quelling the mutiny, you attempted, and, perhaps, succeeded, in turning into ridicule the praise, which the Colonel bestowed on the army, asking whether he meant to award them a vote of thanks "for having *done their duty* during the troubles in the *fleet*," and adding, that if the "regular Colonel had no better praise to bestow on his favourite troops, he had better hold his tongue." At the words "regular Colonel," the reporter of your speech says there was "a loud laugh;" but, as to the cause of the said laugh, he very wisely leaves that point to be decided by those who are best acquainted with the sense, decency, and dignity of the persons present. Colonel Craufurd never suggested the propriety of passing a vote of thanks to the army, though most assuredly he might have done it with more justice than you could propose

such a vote to men who had never done any thing at all. He only cited the conduct of the army, during the mutiny, in order to do away the effect of your insinuation against their fidelity; but, to take you upon your own ground, if the army deserve no thanks "for having done *their* duty, during the "troubles in the fleet," what thanks do *you* deserve for having, on that occasion, done *your* duty? If Colonel Craufurd's praise of the army was so very poor, that he had better have held his tongue, why do you call on us to admire your conduct, which, at best, does not merit praise nearly so great as that which was due to any one officer in the army? If the ministers did tremble, if those poor timid men Messrs. Pitt, Dundas, and Windham, really did stand in need of your aid to "prop them up;" if the members of parliament really did skulk for fear; if it be true, that "the whole country was appalled," you must certainly allow the army, including the marines, to come in with you for some little share of the honour of having preserved the monarchy; and, therefore, it is rather selfish to exclude them from all pretension to thanks, while you desire us to regard your merits, on that account, not only as an ample atonement for all the mischiefs of a pretty long and a most factious political life, but also as a ground whereon to claim the future confidence of the parliament and the country.

Returning now to the subject of your political *constancy*, that is to say, your uniform and unshaken attachment to the cause and the persons that you pledge yourself to, or are connected with, I must advert to the occasion of your giving the challenge, of which I have already spoken.—In reply to Mr. Windham, during the debate on the address, in answer to the King's Message relative to the rebellion in Dublin, you had given an unbounded scope to your true English feeling. You "could not suppress "the *indignation*, which you felt at the attempt made by the right honourable gentleman to clog the operations of government." In consequence of this salty of patriotism and loyalty, you received the righteously-deserved commendations of Messrs. Archdall and Addington. "I wish," said the former, "that gentlemen, who are "so forward in bringing objections against "the conduct of ministers, would imitate "the conduct of the honourable gentleman" [Mr. Sheridan] "who, on every "great and trying occasion has taken the "lead in loyalty and patriotism. That

"honourable gentleman has amid all the "violence of party and all the changes of "political opinion, constantly adhered to "*truly British language and feelings*."—Mr. Addington, was still more lofty in his encomiums. "I cannot," said he, "do "better than recommend the patriotic conduct of the honourable gentleman [Mr. Sheridan,] who has, on every *trying occasion*, taken the lead in devotion to the "honour and interests of his country. I "beg the House to consider what the honourable gentleman's conduct has been, "on several *trying and interesting occasions*. "When the mutiny existed at the Nore, "the honourable gentleman nobly and "manfully displayed his *patriotic feelings*. "Now, when the country is threatened "with invasion his anxiety is not about, "who is the minister; but about, 'where "is the enemy.' These are memorable "words. This is the language of a *true patriot*. I have not the *honour and the happiness* of knowing the honourable gentleman much; but I will venture to assert, "that he will be *highly admired by posterity*, when his political conduct shall be "*faithfully* detailed in the page of history; "and, I wish some persons, who oppose "him, entertained the same *purity* of public principle."—After the speech of Mr. Addington, Mr. Windham rose, and said:—"This has been literally a day "of eulogies. It puts one in mind of the "anniversaries of the establishment of great "public institutions, when every exercise "is devoted to the celebration of the virtues of the founder. I hope the honourable gentleman" [Mr. Sheridan] "will "not be backward in repaying, with his "support, those who have been so profuse "in their expressions of admiration of him."—In the debate of the 20th of July, Mr. Windham had said, (by way of observation on your statement, that you had been misunderstood by Mr. Pitt:) "it is not very "wonderful, that my right honourable "friend should misunderstand the honourable gentleman, for, he," [Mr. Sheridan] "has lately gone *backwards and forwards* so "often, that, at last, he really seems not to "know *on which side of the question* or even "on *which side of the House* he is speaking."—Stung to the quick by these remarks, the justice of which was evident to every one, you seized on the favourable opportunity of the debate on the motion with respect to Ireland, when the minds of the poor people in the gallery were addled with fear, to come forward with what you hoped would prove at once a justification of yourself and

* On the 15th July, 1803.

a retaliation upon your adversary. Stimulated by this double motive, and backed by the minister as well as by the mob, in "meek and modest sort you thus began:" — "I am deeply penetrated with gratitude for the very handsome manner, in which the right hon. gentleman" [Mr. H. Addington] "and a very old and intimate friend of mine" [Mr. Archdall] "have been pleased to speak of my public conduct. I am, however, at present, principally induced to rise, to say a few words, in consequence of an allusion from a right honourable gentleman" [Mr. Windham,] "who has accused me of *not knowing to which side of the House to attach myself*; but, I will *defy* the right honourable gentleman to point out *a single pledge that I have ever forfeited*; a single political sentiment that I ever renounced; a single political attachment that I have ever deserted. On the subject of changing sides the right honourable gentleman has much greater claims to knowledge than I have. I can remember, that he acted, for a considerable time, with these persons, to whom I myself have the honour to be attached. He afterwards *thought proper to remove to the other side*, where he staid *as long as he could*, and now he has made *a diagonal cut* to the station, whence, I hope he will not speedily be removed. Such has been the right honourable gentleman's experience of changing sides." — Windham's changing sides has certainly nothing to do with your conduct in that respect, except as far as it may relate to some question between you and him. But, it may, nevertheless, be worth while to point out the weakness of this attempt at retaliation. Mr. Windham, did, it seems, think proper to leave you and go to the other side, and was it not time to think proper to leave you, when you were become the eulogist of the rebels and regicides of France? Was it not time to leave you, when you were ready to swear, nay, when you actually *did swear*, that your political opinions were the same as those of Arthur O'Connor? Grant that O'Connor's treasons were not known to you: I do unequivocally grant it; but he stood, at that moment, in a court of justice, accused of treason, and beset with circumstances so strong against him as to leave little room for doubt of his guilt; and, it presently after appeared, that he had actually committed treason in Ireland, and was, at the moment when you were living in the utmost intimacy with him, actually engaged in a project for introducing the enemy into that part of his Majesty's dominions. When

you reflect on this, Sir, do you think that Mr. Windham need blush at being reminded of having quitted the bench on which you sat? But, he staid on the other side "as long as he could," and then took a diagonal cut. Yes, as in the former instance; as long as he could, as long as honour would suffer him. He quitted you when you defended the rebels of France, and he quitted the ministers when they made a peace with those rebels, a peace which has produced all, and more than all, the mischiefs which he apprehended from it. — This is, a sort of changing sides, Sir, which is not only no mark of versatility, but which is, on the contrary, absolutely necessary to the preservation of consistency and integrity: it is a change of place, arising from a resolution not to yield to a change of principle. Very different indeed are the changes, which have, at all times, been apparent in your political conduct and views. Of all the persons, who ever have, in this country, made a figure in public life, it may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that no one has, at any time, been less famed for political constancy than yourself. The exactly contrary quality is, indeed, your well-known characteristic; and, the pretensions, which you have, on this score, lately set up, together with your practice upon the same occasion, really put one in mind of the prayer, in which the wolf solicits a short suspension of his abstemious and merciful propensity. You are renowned for sudden changes in your sentiments, and for absconding from your party. The gratification of your own personal vanity is known to be so far preferable to every thing else, that the very warmest, that is to say, the most credulous and foolish of your friends have seldom confided in you. You are continually upon the look-out for occasions for acquiring distinct merit, and individual popularity. It has been well and truly said of you, that you hunt not in pack; but, while others are steadily engaged in the chase, you are beating about for yourself; always taking care, however, if the day prove fortunate, to come in amongst the first and most noisy at the death. Numerous are the facts, which might be, and which, hereafter, shall be, cited in proof of this your selfish and trimming system of politics; but, at present, I shall confine myself to the events of the very last session of parliament. — "I *defy* the right honourable gentleman to point out a single pledge that I have ever forfeited; a single political sentiment that I have ever renounced; a single political attachment that I have ever deserted." — As to *pledges*, Sir, seeing

that I have resolved to confine myself to the events of last session, I will only ask you, whether you did, or did not, forfeit that which you gave with respect to the Nabob of the Carnatic? The unjust treatment, or pretended unjust treatment, of this prince became a topic of some interest so early as the month of January, 1802; and, the moment the public espoused his cause, you, according to your usual custom, stepped forth, armed cap-à-pied, as his champion. Yet, as pushing matters to extremity might have thrown you back with the ministers, with whom you were then beginning to coquet, you took care not to come to a specific motion for an inquiry, but just kept possession of the ground by the means of frequent notices, and postponements as frequent; thus contriving to obtain, by the very same act, the favour both of the ministers and the multitude. Twenty times did the purveyors of the newspapers crowd down to Westminster, in full confidence of coming home loaded with your philanthropic speech, and twenty times did they return unladen to their expecting employers. This, which one can regard as nothing better than a humbug, was kept up from the beginning of April to the 22d of June, 1802; on which latter day, Mr. Nicholls, seeing the session just about to close, without any step having been taken on a subject which he thought, and which you had represented, as of the first importance, began a speech prefatory to a motion similar to that, which you had promised to make, but which you had not made; but, in order to prevent his making this motion, you, Sir, interrupted his speech by a motion for *counting the House*; and, there being only thirty-three members present, an adjournment, of course, took place. On the next day, the 23d of June, 1802, you, in resuming the subject, began by observing, that you were happy in perceiving Mr. Nicholls in "*one of his places*," for, that "he shifted his seat so frequently that there was no saying to which side of the House he belonged;" and that, for your own part, you were "not remarkable for sitting one day upon one side of the House, and the next changing your place to the other, making, as it were, experiments on the best seats."—You boasted rather too soon, Sir. Little did you imagine, that the same charge, and almost in the same form of words, would be preferred against yourself ere thirteen months should pass over your head!—But, to come to the *pledge*. "It is," said you, "unnecessary for me to enter into a train of argument to prove the right of the In-

dian Princes to their own dominions. Since the settlement made in the year, 1703, we have ourselves uniformly recognized the title of the rights of the Nabob of Arcot. Yet, in defiance of this right, the lineal heir of that dominion is now deposed by us, on account of the alleged crimes of his grandfather and his father, on the ground of an unlawful correspondence with the late Sultan of the Mysore. But, I will ask, who were the informers on this charge? The government of India: who were the accusers? The government of India: who were the witnesses? The government of India: who were the judges? The government of India: who were the receivers of the fines and forfeitures? The government of India. Upon these circumstances; on the consideration, that the same persons, who were informers, accusers, witnesses, and judges, were also to enjoy the mulets and beneficial interest arising from the conviction, there is reason to entertain suspicion of the justice and equity of the proceeding. I shall be satisfied, if ministers will take up the matter in such a way as to bring it to a full and fair investigation; but, if they do not, I PLEDGE myself to take it up in such a way, that, if the government of India has been guilty of the inordinate acts, which are now charged upon them, at least the British nation shall be rescued from the suspicion of giving countenance to acts so flagrant and so atrocious; and the government itself will be shown the evil policy of seeking its own aggrandizement by trampling on those principles of justice and honour, which can alone secure to them the attachment of the natives."—The public, Sir, with whom this speech had a wonderful effect, have, at this day, quite forgotten that it was ever uttered; and, I myself, though, as to such matters, tolerably vigilant, had, really, but a faint recollection of it, when on the 10th of August last, after fourteen months of profound silence, on your part, the papers, which you had moved for, in 1802, were laid before the House. What was now your conduct, Sir? Did you redeem, or did you "forfeit" your "pledge"? Did you adhere to the Nabob of Arcot? Or, did you abandon him, and that too upon the most miserable pretext, ever set up by mortal man? "I did move," said you, "for some of those papers, with a view to a motion, which I meant to make, respecting the affairs of the Carnatic; but, so many other papers have been moved for, that it is impossible the motion can come on this session."

"and, at all events, I should not have brought it on under the present circumstances, because I could not have done it, without appearing to support the language used by France upon this subject."—And, is it thus, Sir, that you keep your engagements? Is this an instance of that political constancy, of which you boast? Was it on grounds like these that you relinquished the "full and fair investigation," which you had, in the most explicit and most solemn manner, pledged yourself to institute, for the great purpose of "rescuing the British nation from the suspicion of giving countenance to acts so flagrant and so atrocious?" Shall it be said, that the "British ARISTIDES,"* had recourse to an expedient like this, to get rid of his promise towards a person, whose cause he had espoused, and, with respect to whom, "the principles of justice and of honour had been trampled on?"—If the 10th of August was too late a day to take up the subject, as indeed it was, why did you not call it forward on an earlier day? The House had been assembled nine months; and, could you not, during the whole of that time, find a day for the investigation? And why were papers, which were called for, and ordered, in June, 1802, kept back till the middle of August, 1803, and then laid upon the table just two days before the Parliament was prorogued? Would you have borne this delay, if you had, at first, been in earnest, or if you had not forfeited your "pledge" from some motive, which it would not have been very convenient to avow?—But, it seems, your intended proceeding in this business would have been clogged by the "many other papers," which had been moved for. What, Sir, is it possible, that additional documents, all relating to the same subject, could have rendered the matter more difficult to discuss? Leaving this objection to its inevitable fate, I will now offer a remark or two on the grand reason, which induced you, not only to forego the investigation at the time when the materials for it were brought up, but to lay it aside altogether. "At all events," said you, "I should not have brought it on under the present circumstances, because I could not have done it, without appearing to support the language used by France upon this subject."—So, because Eng-

land is threatened with an invasion by France, means are not to be taken for rescuing the nation from the suspicion of having given countenance "to acts the most flagrant and atrocious!" because England is threatened by an unjust and unrelenting enemy, she herself is to lie under the charge, preferred by yourself, of having connived at injustice and unrelenting cruelty towards a prince, from whom she had never received an injury! because the situation of the country is critical, Parliament is to wink at all the follies and crimes in the administration of affairs, both at home and abroad! How does this agree, Sir, with the doctrine, heretofore laid down by you? "The Right Honourable Gentleman," said you, "has made a strange assertion: according to him, the worse the country is situated, the more ready should the House be to lend their assistance to ministers! What would be the effect of such doctrine, if it were to be adopted by the House? Would it not annihilate their first duties, by extinguishing that vigilance and jealousy by which alone those duties can be performed?"* This "strange assertion" you now make; this very doctrine you are now endeavouring to impose upon the House, and, should the House adopt it, they will very soon be reduced to a level with the legislative mutes of Buonaparté. This is, however, no new doctrine: it has been preached by the supporters of every ministry, who have plunged the nation into difficulties and disgrace. In times of peril, it has always been a favourite topic with the timid stock-holder, the profligate tool of power, and the hungry hunter after place.†—But, it appears, that, besides the reluctance arising from the dangers of the country, you refrain from bringing on your promised investigation, because, you could not do it, "without appearing to support the language used by France upon this subject." Now, Sir, what is the language used by France upon this subject? The very same language which you yourself made use of on the 23d of June, 1802! Nay, the MONITEUR and the MERCURE DE FRANCE, translate your very words, and convey them from one end of Europe to the other, as an irrefragable proof of the ambition, the injustice, the rapacity, the cruelty, or to use your own words, "the flagrant and atrocious acts," of the British Government

* Whether the writer spoke ironically, or not, I shall not pretend to say, but, in the M. Post of the 20th instant was the following little paragraph: "The Windhamites cry against Mr. Sheridan from the same motives that the evasive Greeks hated Aristides!"

* Speech, 16th Feb. 1801. Debrett's Parl. Register.

† Mr. Burke has some good observations on this doctrine: see the motto to this sheet.

in India. The language used by France, on this subject, *you* put into her mouth; upon *your* authority she is now accusing this country of acts more tyrannical and of views more ambitious than she herself can be accused of: and, because you would not appear to *support* this her language, you decline bringing on the subject; you leave the British nation loaded with the foulest of suspicions, and you *forfeit a pledge*, solemnly given to the Parliament and the people! At the time when you first broached this matter, you had in view only the reputation it would acquire you: you thought to make a good thing of it: you did not foresee those potent reasons for forbearance, which have since occurred to you, and of which I shall speak more explicitly when I come to consider your conduct relative to the Council of War. When, therefore, the papers, which, on the 10th of August last, forced from you the miserable excuse, on which I have been remarking, were brought up, you knew not what to say, nor which way to look. Here was before the House a complete specimen of the sort of service, which the country derives from your "true English feeling." In the case of the mutiny in the fleet, the cause and effect, the first and second acts, of your conduct, were at a greater distance, or, at least, they were not connected by a link so visible. Men of sense and reflection did, indeed, perceive, that, in condemning the conduct of the mutineers, you were only making a very trifling and inadequate atonement for the mischief theretofore done by your anarchical speeches, in as well as out of Parliament; they perceived, that "you were only bringing your bucket, or rather tumbler full to extinguish the mighty conflagration, which you had so sedulously assisted in producing;"* but, to the Public in general, and, indeed, to the House itself, the connexion was not nearly so evident as in the case now under consideration, where cause and effect met, as it were by appointment, and, side by side, presented themselves to the notice of the spectators. It was during the debate on the famous Vote of Thanks to the Volunteer Corps. I shall not forget the scene the longest day I have to live. You were standing by the side of the table, giving vent to the full tide of your "true English feeling;" exhorting the members, to leave behind them all their political animosities, all party-spirit; to do and to say nothing that might tend to embarrass the government, or feed the enemy

* Mr. Windham's Speech, 4th Aug. 1803.

with hopes or with arguments against us, but firmly to unite, and to act as one man, in defence of their Sovereign and their country. Just at this moment it was, that the Clerk of the House came up, and clapped down, close beside you, the enormous packet of papers, which you yourself had called for, with a view of making good your charge of "*flagrant and atrocious*" conduct against the very government, towards whom you were now calling for unlimited forbearance! "Nothing," as Fielding says, in speaking of his puppet-men, who, just at the close of a long harangue on the excellent moral effects of his scenes, was interrupted by the noise of the landlady dragging in her maid, whom she had detected in an intrigue with the Merry Andrew, and who, in her justification, pleaded the example of the fine lady in the puppet-show, "nothing could have happened so very inopportune as this accident; the most wanton malice of fortune could not have contrived such another stratagem to confound the poor fellow, while he was so triumphantly descanting on the excellence of his principles. His mouth was now as effectually stopped, as that of a quack must be, if in the midst of a declamation on the great virtues of his pills and powders, the corpse of one of his martyrs should be brought forth, and deposited upon the table before him, as a testimony of his skill."—Leaving you, Sir, to make the application, and to reflect how far you were prudent in *defying* the world "to point out a single *pledge* that you had ever forfeited," I should now proceed to the remaining points of this part of the subject, which want of room, compels me to defer till my next. — In the meantime, I am, Sir, yours, &c. &c.

WM. COBBETT.

Duke Street, 20th Sep. 1803.

TO THE EDITOR.

September 18th, 1803.

SIR,—The vile COMMERCIAL GREATNESS, on which to place all our reliance, has so long been a favourite delusion, you have begun to pourtray in its true colours; you have pierced the deceitful visor; you have touched the shield with your spear, and proved how hollow it sounds! Go on, Sir, to warn the nation, that this commerce, valuable and praise-worthy as it is before it exceeds its limits; before it destroys ancient families, overshadows liberal professions, discourages intellectual eminence, and places all distinction in wealth, must not grow too

insolent, and put too much confidence in its own strength. There must always come a time, and that time is actually come to this country, when it must sink back to its proper level, or be destroyed. In the hour of bloated prosperity, it has forgot the heroic spirits and hardy tempers by whom it was nurs'd, and under whom it grew up; but the moment is arrived when weakened with splendor and enfeebled by luxury, it must forego its pride and look to the same protectors for the preservation of its age! How absurd the idea, that this commerce can defend itself by its own powers! A system so artificial can no longer support itself, when a great nation, actuated by ambition, or wickedness, or necessity, chooses to abandon the advantages and the evils of a luxurious and refined state, and to have recourse again to natural strength. The age of chivalry must return; the statesman, the soldier, and the sailor, must again find their due places in society, and the sensual and narrow minded citizen, puffed up with wealth, and inebriated with purchased titles, must no longer trample on those, from the toils and perils, and perhaps the blood, of whose ancestors his opulence has sprung, and by whom and whose posterity that opulence can alone be secured. It was not prejudice, or an illiberal principle, which dictated the inferiority of estimation, in which *traders* were formerly held: it was wisdom, it was necessity which taught it; and of all odious aristocracies, the aristocracy of wealth, to which a commercial country has so strong a tendency, is the most odious the most dangerous, and the least permanent.—It is now universally agreed that we must become an armed people; our riches can no longer protect us; our paper currency and our flourishes on the Stock-Exchange, can only exist while surrounded by the guard of our swords. But it is not by the volunteer companies of *towns*, it is not by effeminate shopkeepers commanded by effeminate captains from the desk and counting-house, men whose souls are engrossed by calculations of credit and capital, and who are watching all day the fluctuations of the funds, that we must be guarded. It is on the hardy and unsophisticated peasantry, commanded by the antient gentry, of more enlarged minds, of more unshackled pursuits, and of manlier and bolder habits, that we must rely. Leave the tradesman and manufacturer to their shops; but let every country gentleman and young ploughman be a soldier. To mix all the classes, in the manner which the volunteering system necessarily pursues, is to destroy at once the efficiency of arm-

ing, and perhaps to put weapons into the hands of those, from whom we may too soon have occasion to wish them away. — The period is approaching when the descendants of our antient heroes may find the qualities, which brought consideration and honours to their ancestors, again esteemed, and again roused into action. The strength and value of the landed interest will be once more duly appreciated; and the false splendour of mercantile wealth no longer monopolize the attention of the legislature and the government.

"Whither is Europe's antient spirit fled?
Where are those valiant tenants of her shore,
Who from the warrior-bow the strong dart sped,
Or with firm hand the rapid pole-axe bore?
Freeman and soldier was their common name
Who late with reapers to the furrow came:
Now in the front of battle charg'd the foe:
Who taught the steer the wint'ry plough to endure;
Now in full councils check'd encroaching power,
And gave the guardian laws their majesty to know *."

If I could but see an end to this degrading system of FUNDING, and the consequent check which would be given to the ruinous and revolutionary tricks of the money-market, I should yet hope that our military and substantial power, instead of thus trembling on the edge of annihilation, might be greater than it ever yet has been. But the spirit, which prevailed in the days of the PLANTAGENETS and TUDORS, must revive: distinctions must fall into other channels; and legislation be delegated to other tongues. The days of the Veres, and Percies, and Cliffords, and Nevilles must return; and the glory of leading *vassals* into the *field*, instead of bringing the greatest array of *bank-notes* towards the completion of a *loan*, must obtain the smiles of a Monarch and conciliate the regard and admiration of a people.—In the conduct of government, with regard to elections, I am sorry to say, there is an error, which has long been acted upon, and which has produced, and is producing, mischief of fearful magnitude: I allude to the *rank* and *quality* of the candidates, to whom they give their support. Were they to throw their influence into the scale of the country gentlemen of liberal and cultivated minds; competent landed estate, honourable connexions, sound political principles, and attached to the ancient establishments of Europe, their support would not only be free from blame, but would deserve commendation. But look at those who have been the ministerial candidates; Are they men of independent property? Are they the ancient

* See the whole of Akenside's Ode, 173.

gentry of the kingdom? Are they neighbours to the boroughs for which they offered? Are they men of any natural interest there? Have many of them even the legal qualification in land? Placemen, adventurers, bankers, stock brokers, shop keepers, lawyers, East and West-Indians, and mushroom gentry, came down to almost every town and city, and some of them even to counties. It is remarkable, that in the rich and well inhabited county of Kent, which has many ancient families of good estate still resident in it, that, out of 16 members returned to the present Parliament, for the cities and boroughs, there is but one country gentleman of landed estate, and he is of a new family. Of the others, there are at least eleven, who have not, as I believe, a single foot of Kentish land. Indeed, out of the 513 members returned by England and Wales, there are not more than 141, who come under the character of country gentlemen! — All this arises from the ruinous system of FUNDING, which has gone farther towards the destruction of the power and fortune of the ancient gentry, the extinction of the old families, and the ruin of the aristocracy, than the waste of successive civil wars, and the revolutions of many centuries. As long ago as 1757, Postlethwayt in his "Great Britain's True System," makes the following assertion: "when the art of funding was first introduced, the common talk of mankind was, that the people of England must be undone. Some tell us that the event has proved the vanity of that apprehension. But the prediction has been verified, perhaps, in the strict sense. All that was then meant by the assertion, we may suppose, was that the then land possessors, and their posterity, must be undone, and their inheritance given away from them, and become the property of the chiefs of the money-mongers. It could never be their meaning, that the land would run away, or cease to be occupied by somebody. Since our debts have taken place, not near one-tenth of the land of England is possessed by the posterity or heirs of those who possessed it at the revolution. And if the extermination, (as it may be justly enough termed) is not universal, it is only because there were a few overgrown estates, such as the Devonshire, Bedford, Curzon, &c. which have been proof against the waste of luxury and taxes." — I have taken the pains to analyze the lists, and have felt a painful conviction of the truth of these assertions, by seeing them exemplified in the regular

and rapid operation of the system on the return of every successive Parliament for 70 years. At each election more and more country gentlemen withdraw; more names familiar in our history retreat to private life, and then expire; the respect for birth decays; and the public become habituated to see obscure men in honourable stations. But, never were the strides so rapid as in the formation of the present ministry. Never before was a man, without a pretension to family, or even fortune, placed in a high political situation, much less in the rank of Premier; and above all, when there is a deficiency of abilities, for which even the noblest descent and largest fortune would not make amends, it must excite inexpressible astonishment and regret!! But even this is not all. Look at his coadjutors! Yet I must forbear to enter into their history, lest I should appear too personal. I may hereafter have an opportunity to arrange what I have to say on this subject in a manner which requires time and caution, for I would not offend the rules of delicacy: and perhaps the indignation of my spirit might at this moment utter more than is necessary, and more than your paper could at once find room for. ANJOU.

TO THE EDITOR.

Oxford, Sept. 19, 1803.

SIR,—We have read here with pleasure your strictures on the senseless bombast of Pizarro. The Public should often be reminded of the objects to which the moral and political influence of the stage is now directed. In the *School for Scandal* our youth were taught that decency of conduct and morality of sentiment are never failing symptoms of hypocrisy and vice: that genuine virtue is found only among the debauched and the profligate: and that true generosity consists in squandering away the property of others, and lavishing on idleness and vice the hard-earned substance of an industrious and indigent creditor. In the *Stranger* we were presented with a studied apology for adultery, heightened by treachery, and aggravated by the blackest ingratitude. But *Pizarro* has soared still higher. If motives may justly be inferred from words and actions, the original from which this English play is servilely copied was written with a deliberate intention of vilifying the Christian religion, and by an injurious and false comparison, degrading it even below the bloody institutions of Peruvian or Mexican idolatry. — When Louis the Sixteenth, who perished only because

he was afraid to spill the blood of his people in a just cause, was to be rendered odious to that very people; their minds were prepared for regicide by representation, in which one of his predecessors was introduced as a sharer in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. In close imitation of this happy model, Kotzebue presents to us the ferocious adventurers who deluged America with blood, as the true representatives of the Christian character; while he ascribes to the savage and superstitious worshippers of the Sun, all the mild and benevolent principles, promulgated only by the true religion. If truth had been considered, or history consulted, he would have learnt by whom the Spanish cruelties in America were first condemned; and would have found that the venerable *Las Casas* was neither an idolator nor a deist, but a Christian bishop.

Yet this is the play which is selected for the instruction of the British people, in the present awful moment: these are the scenes which challenge the patriotic acclamations of British audiences: and though they fail of these, obtain at least the venal applauses of the British press! Of that loyalty which would insinuate that the British crown is elective, you have already spoken. On that philosophy which asserts with Robespierre, that the sleep of death is eternal*, others have often animadverted. But the general tendency of this play obvious as it is, has been suffered to pass uncensured. There was reason to hope, that, when the gilt leather was tarnished, and the white robes of the actresses were blackened with dirt, this wretched copy of a wretched original would have been allowed to rest in that obscurity to which taste and classic judgment condemn it.

But if instead of this it is once more to be held forth as a standard for British feeling, we trust it will be your task to write in opposition to it being the standard of that religion which it insults, and of that monarchy which it degrades: and we are persuaded that by so doing, you will render a more essential service to the cause of our common defence, than will result from all the declarations against the perfidy, ambition, and tyranny of Buonaparté, that can be uttered by all the admirers of his former justice, moderation, and love of liberty.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

ACADEMICUS.

* See the Song of Cora.

PUBLIC PAPER.

DECREE of the government of MARTINIQUE and ST. LUCIA, concerning the DUTIES of IMPORT and EXPORT of those Colonies, Dated June 20th, 1803.

In the name of the French Republic.—Lewis Thomas Villaret Joyeuse, Captain-General of Martinique and St. Lucie; and Charles Henry Bertin, Counsellor of State and Colonial Prefect of said Islands.—In consideration of the acts of hostility committed some days past by the English, on French and foreign vessels in sight of this colony:—Considering the urgency of providing supplies of provisions and objects of the first necessity for the Islands of Martinique and St. Lucie:—And considering, moreover, the great importance of securing for the inhabitants a vent for the colonial productions, and of discharging the expenses incurred by providing for the defence of the said colonies,—Decree as follows:—Art. I. From this day, the entrance of all the ports of the Islands of Martinique and St. Lucie shall be open to foreigners, for the introduction of all kinds of provisions, and articles of the first necessity, and for the exportation of colonial produce, on the following conditions:—Art. II. The arrêté of the 11th Nivôse, year II, relative to the duties of export and import in the islands of Martinique and St. Lucie, is renewed, as far as concerns the introduction of provisions and articles of the first necessity; and the 3d article of the arrêté of the Consuls of the 4th Messidor, year 10, establishing the duty of entry at six francs on every five myriagrammes of foreign cod-fish, and the 5th article of the arrêté of the ci-devant council of state of the 30th of August, 1784, which establishes a duty of entry of three francs per quintal on foreign salted beef and fish, and provisionally repealed:—Art. III. All provisions and articles of consumption arriving from a foreign country, shall be subject to a local duty of one per cent. and to an additional duty of two per cent.—Art. IV. Colonial productions exported to foreign countries shall be subject to the duty called *Damaine d'Occident*, viz. three and a half per cent. on their value, and ten sols per livre, and sugars to the duty besides of forty sols per quintal; and also to the duty of ten sols per livre. The said productions shall likewise be subject to a local duty of one per cent. and to an additional duty of one per cent.—Art. V. The colonial productions exported to France by French subjects, shall remain subject to the duty of two per cent. on their value, which duty shall be charged to the seller or shipper, and shall be paid to the Customs, by the master of the vessel, —Art. VI. The Director General of the Customs is charged with the execution of the present arrêté, which shall be printed, read, published, and affixed in all the customary places: a copy of which shall be sent to the Chief Judge with a request to have the same recorded in the registry of the tribunals.—Decreed at Fort de France, in the island of Martinique, the first Messidor, year II of the French Republic.

(Signed)

VILLARET, BERTIN.

DECREE of the Government of ST. DOMINGO, for ADMITTING PROVISIONS into the island FREE OF DUTY. Dated July 5, 1803.

In the name of the French government:—The General in Chief, Captain-General of the colony of St. Domingo decrees:—Art. I. The duties established by the tariff of the 10th Nivôse last (31st

December,) on the commodities hereinafter enumerated, are suppressed, to wit: on grain, biscuit, rice, and all kinds of salt provisions whatever.—II. These articles will be admitted to entry free of duty. The importer will be subjected only to the fees of the Custom-House, and other duties established by regulations.—III. This exemption from duty shall continue during the war, to commence from the date of this arrêté in all the ports of the colony, which are henceforward open to foreign commerce.—IV. The Colonial Prefect is charged with the execution of this decree, which will be inserted in the Official Gazette.—At the quarters of the General of the Cape, the 16th Messidor, 11th year. DT. ROCHAMBEAU.

DECRETE of the Government of ST. DOMINGO, declaring the ISLAND in a STATE of SIEGE. Dated July 6th 1803.

In the name of the French Government.—The General in Chief, Captain-General of the Colony of St. Domingo, considering that the hostilities committed on the coasts of St. Domingo by English ships do not leave the least doubts of a rupture between France and England. Considering that it is absolutely necessary to cut off all communication between the interior and exterior enemy. Considering also that the Colony, situated as it is, can and ought to be governed by a single administration, and under the immediate orders to the military authority decrees:—Art. I. St. Domingo is declared in a state of siege.—II. All civil and judiciary authorities are suspended.—III. The present shall be executed under the care of General Thouvenot, Chief of the Staff of the Army in the Cape, on the day of this publication, in the chief places, besides it shall be printed, published, posted up, and inserted in the Official Gazette.—At the head-quarters of the Cape, 17th Messidor, year 11. DT. ROCHAMBEAU.

FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPER.

NOTICE respecting the BILLS drawn on the FRENCH GOVERNMENT, by the GOVERNMENT of ST. DOMINGO. Dated July 3, 1803.

Army of St. Domingo.—At the Head-Quarters of the Cape, the 9th Messidor, 11th year of the French Republic.

The General in Chief orders Citizen Roux, printer of the government, instantaneously to print in the Official Gazette, and therein to insert, the following article:—The General in Chief gives in the most formal manner, the lie to the letter of the Minister of Marine, addressed to the First Consul, under date of the 5th of Floréal, inserted in the *Moniteur* of the 10th of the same month. This letter falsely censures the government bills drawn on France, and particularly those of Alexander Linder. I am compelled to remove this notorious calumny, and I owe it to General Le Clerc, who alone with me has issued them, to unmask the absurdity of such an assertion.

DT. ROCHAMBEAU.

INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.—Some time ago, the Marquis of Wellesley repaired to the capital of the Nabob of Oude, for the purpose of making some political arrangements. The propositions which

he offered were readily agreed to by his Highness, who has lately expressed his satisfaction at the result of the measures then concerted, by which considerable additions have been made to his revenue. Mirsa Ahmed Ali Khaun, the Nabob vizier's second son, is to command a strong detachment, with which he is to join the coalition against Juswunt Rao Holkar.—Col. Wellesley has taken the field against the Western Mahrattas, and captured Poonah. The object of these movements is to support the Peishwa against Holkar and Scindea. An insurrection has broken out in Candahar, and Ahured, a celebrated chief, has assembled a large number of military followers, and avowed his intention of disputing the sovereignty of the Kingdom.—The *Hamburgh Correspondent* of the 30th ult. contains an article, dated on the 20th, on the frontiers of Russia, stating that "the remonstrance which had been made at Paris, against the occupation of the Hanoverian territories had been unsuccessful, and that a written answer had been made, declaring that the measures which had been adopted with regard to the electorate could not be changed."—It is said at Berlin, that negotiations are going on for the removal of all French troops from the Elbe and the Weser, and for withdrawing the British ships from the blockade of those rivers. The great inconvenience which has arisen in all the countries which were formerly supplied, through those rivers, renders the raising of the blockade a measure of the first importance.—On the 2d instant the states of the territory of Hanover, both ecclesiastical and civil, and the deputies of the towns were convened in the Knights' Hall, in the palace of Hanover, by gen. Mortier, to deliberate on the means of supplying the arrears of pay, which the electorate had been directed to provide for the French troops. The states declared their inability to furnish the requisite sum, without the aid of new loans, or ordering military execution upon the inhabitants.—The great army which the Prince of Denmark has been for some time past assembling on the frontiers of Holstein, for maintaining the neutrality of the Danish territories, is to be dispersed at the end of September; and the detachments which composed it are to return to their different garrisons.—Don Jose d'Almeida, the Portuguese minister, who has always opposed the influence of France at the court of Lisbon, has been removed from his offices, and is to be dispatched on a mission to Germany. The foreign and war departments will, for the present, be filled by M. Pinto, who formerly held them, but who, on the appointment of Don Almeida, was removed to the home department.—Gen. Lasnes, who was recalled at the instance of the Portuguese government, has been again sent to that court by the First Consul, and has succeeded in obtaining the acquiescence of the government to certain demands favourable to the views of France and injurious to the interests of Great Britain.—Accounts from Madrid state that the Spaniards offered a large sum of money to France as the

price of neutrality, but that the French rejected it. Accordingly, a second offer was made, and at the same time, Spain dubious of its success, ordered a general levy, which was enforced with the utmost severity.—After several conferences between the Queen Dowager, regent and ministers of the kingdom of Etruria, and Gen. Murat, the French ambassador at Florence, Charles Louis, the young prince, received, on the 15th ult. the homage of the senate and people, as sovereign of Etruria.—A letter from Gen. Hawkins, commissioner of the United States of America to the Creek Indians, to the governor of Georgia states, that a meeting of the chiefs of the Creeks, joined by a deputation from the Cherokees, Chickasaws, and Choctaws, was held on the 20th of May last, at Ochepfan, or Coesaw river, and that on the 24th they were joined by the Seminovles, and other chiefs in opposition, together with Bowles, director general of the Muskogees (Creeks). On the 28th, Bowles was apprehended by order of the chiefs, loaded with irons, and sent, under a strong guard of Indians, to Tolch, the Spanish governor of Pensacola.—On the 16th July, 1803, the President of the United States issued a proclamation for holding an extraordinary session of the American congress at Washington, on the 17th October next, for the consideration of matters of great importance.

DOMESTIC.—On the 12th instant day-guards were mounted in Dublin, for the first time, and every coach and boat which left the city was strictly examined. One of the rebels was tried and convicted on the 13th; Emmett was arraigned on the 14th, but his trial was postponed till the 20th: six others were put to the bar and received sentence of death, on the same day: one was executed in Thomas Street on the 15th, and on the 17th two more were to be executed at Palmerston, near Dublin. Russell was lodged in Kilmainham jail on the 14th, and was to be tried at the next term, when he will appear in the King's Bench, and be identified as a person who has been outlawed.—On the 16th, several persons connected with Emmett were examined by Mr. Morsden at the Castle; and the keeper of the tower was shot by one of the insurgents whom he was attempting to apprehend. Twenty-five rebels who were assembled in a retired place near Ballynaskill, Queen's County, were discovered, and after a desperate resistance were taken by a party of the Abbeyfeix yeomanry, and committed to Maryborough jail. It is said that Dwyer, who is so well known by the name of the Mountain Robber, and was intimately concerned in the late rebellion, has been arrested at Baltinglass, in the County of Wicklow.—On the 14th instant, his Majesty's order in council was issued, for the further prorogation of Parliament from the 6th of October to the 3d of November. It is supposed that it will meet for the dispatch of business, on the 29th of November. The Gazette of last Saturday contains his Majesty's proclamations directing a general fast and humiliation, throughout England and Ireland on Wednesday the 19th of October;

and throughout Scotland on the 20th: and also prayers and supplications for the success of our arms in the present just and necessary war.—On the 17th instant, Astlett was tried at the Old Bailey for secreting and embezzling certain property of the Bank of England, and after a long investigation of the cause, the jury consulted with each other for about five minutes and returned the prisoner guilty.—The first embarkation of foreigners, conformably to his Majesty's proclamation of the 31st of August, was made at Gravesend, on the 16th instant. The number amounted to 100, among whom were two refractory persons who were confined on board a cutter in the river. This embarkation is made at the expense of government, and those who chose to pay the expense of their removal, have gone on board of different neutral ships, and are to be landed either in France, Holland, or Italy. The Hon. Mr. Paget, the English minister to the Court of Vienna, has arrived in London by the way of Lusum, on a leave of absence.—Mr. Merry, our newly appointed minister to America, has left town for Plymouth, where a frigate is waiting to convoy him to the place of his destination.

MILITARY.—The French army in Hanover, including those in Osnaburgh, amounts to about 35,000 men, the greatest part of whom it is said, will be withdrawn from the territories of the Electorate, as soon as their arrears of pay shall be supplied. Hanover will then be garrisoned by 8,000 Prussian troops, upon condition that the payment of two millions of livres shall be secured to the French government, during the war. The daily expense of the French army there, amounts to upwards of 10,000 rix-dollars; and the pay due to the disbanded Hanoverian soldiers, who amount to 14,537 men, is 543,000 dollars.—Sixteen French soldiers were lately condemned by a court martial, for plunder: four of them were shot on the parade at Hanover, three were sent to the galleys, and the rest were otherwise punished.—Several waggons loaded with chests of arms, which were found in the Hanoverian arsenals, have been sent off for France.—General Mortier has proposed that strong works shall be erected at different points on the Elbe and the Weser; and the Hanoverian magistrates have been required to furnish the French officers, who are to superintend the execution of the measure, with every thing requisite.—The French general at Cuxhaven has been endeavouring to obtain possession of the Castle of Ritzbuttle, together with the cannon and military stores contained in it. The governor, however, positively refused to yield it, and his refusal has received the approbation of the Senate of Hamburg.—Great numbers of French troops are in motion on the left bank of the Rhine, and all that were recently stationed at Brussels, are marching to join the army which is collecting between Ghent and Bruges. All the troops garrisoned in Picardy, and the old frontier of France, from Lisle to Metz, have received orders from the minister at war, to hold themselves in readiness to march within twenty-four hours after they

shall receive notice—Those who are to form the military force which is intended to be brought against England, continue to arrive at the different places of assemblage. The French troops in Italy have for a long time been gradually increasing, and, at present, amount to a very considerable number. Piedmont contains an army of reserve from which reinforcements are constantly sent, and which is daily replenished by supplies from France. Those in the interior are regularly advancing towards the coasts, particularly towards the coast of the Adriatic; and two strong divisions which were preparing to form camps between Mantua and Verona have, in consequence of some arrangement made with Austria, been marched towards the Neapolitan dominions, leaving only about 12,000 men in the district of Mantua, and on the left bank of the Adige. The army of observation which occupies the Neapolitan and Roman districts on the Adriatic, under the command of General St. Cyr, is to be greatly reinforced: the head quarters, which were lately at Foggia, near the Gulph of Manfredania, are transferred to Tarentum. All the garrisons and posts on the Adriatic, from the Gulph of Genoa, and on the shores of the sea of Tuscany, have been completed. General Perignon, who commanded the Army of the Pyrenees, during the war with Spain, is to be placed at the head of an army which is to be assembled on the frontiers of Spain.—General Rochambeau has declared the Island of St. Domingo to be in a state of siege.—Numerous divisions of British troops are to be stationed on the southern and eastern coasts during the winter, and preparations for their accommodation are immediately to be made. It is said that huts are to be erected in the New Forest, Hampshire, for a very numerous division, and that others are also to be erected in different parts of the coast.

NAVAL.—Admiral Linois, who sailed from Europe a short time previous to the King's message of the 8th March, destined, as it was supposed, for Pondicherry, has arrived at the C. of Good Hope, and 4000 troops who were on board, and who were under the command of gen. Decaen, have been landed and have joined the Dutch garrison.—On the 14th instant, a fleet of twenty five gun boats, escorted by a large sloop, made good their passage from Dunkirk to Calais, and were seen at anchor in the road, waiting for the tide, to go into the harbour. The British cruisers were all to the westward of Calais, and were prevented by the wind, from coming up with them.—Admiral Bruix, who has been appointed to the command of the national flotilla, now arming against England, immediately on his arrival at Buolonge issued an encouraging proclamation to the officers and men who were to be under his command.—Accounts have been received of the capture of the island of St. Pierre, on the 30th June, by Capt. Malbon, in the *Aurora*, of 28 guns. The island was formerly delivered up by the French Commissary, who acted as Governor. Capt. Malbon found about one hundred and twenty stand of arms, a French brig and schooner, eleven small vessels, and near a hundred small batteaux, of which he took possession. He also made prisoners of 180 men,

whom he carried to St. John's, in Newfoundland.

—On the 27th of June, Capt. Brisbane, in the *Goliath*, off Cape Nichola Mole, captured a French sloop of 3 guns and some swivels, bound from St. Jago de Cuba to Port au Prince, with a cargo of sugar, and 3476 dollars in cash. On the 28th Capt. Brisbane captured the French Corvette *La Mignonne* of 16 guns and 80 men, two days from Les Cayes, to the Cape, on her way to France.—On the same day com. Bayntun in the *Cumberland*, in company with the *Vanguard*, off Cape Nicola Mole, captured the French frigate *Croce* of 44 guns and 150 men. She was bound from Cape François to Port au Prince, and had on board gen. Morgan, (the second in command at St. Domingo) together with his staff and 530 troops. While com. Bayntun was taking possession of his prize, a French schooner from Cape François bound to Port au Prince came in sight and was captured. She had on board 100 blood-hounds from Cuba—Some other ships of adm. Duckworth's squadron have sent into Port Royal, the French brigg *l'Aiguille* of 8 guns, the *Vigilant* of 18 guns, and 100 schooners *la Supérieure* and *le Poison volant*.—On the 11th of July, Capt Bissell in the *Racoon* sloop, between the islands of Guanaba and St. Domingo, after an action of forty minutes, captured the French brigg *le Lodi* of 20 guns. To his dispatches capt. Bissell has added the following list of vessels taken and destroyed by him since the 5th:—On the 6th sunk a schooner at anchor in a bay near Cape Rosa; on the 7th took the schooner, *la Vertu* of 2 guns, carrying troops and provisions from Port au Prince to Jeremia, and the sloop *l'Ami des Colonies* of 2 guns, and on the 9th ran a schooner on shore in Barradies bay, and sunk her.—On the 29th of August, capt. Fleming of the *Egyptienne*, captured the French privateer *la Chiffonette* of 14 guns and 80 men, 26 days from Bordeaux.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

FRENCH PREPARATIONS.—About ten days ago the newspapers were full of defiance: they prayed for Buonaparté to come, "anticipating, in the result, a glorious day for Britain." Now, however, when he talks loud again, they begin, as the vulgar call it, to "draw in their horns;" their vapouring has already ceased; and, if a French flotilla should actually get upon our coast, we shall see them as civil and polite to the Consul as they formerly were; nor ought one to be at all surprized, if they were to pull down Mr. Rolla and put up Mr. Sheridan, of June 1800, in his stead. How quickly the patriotic and loyal placards would disappear? Down would come the pictures where the Consul is represented as twitched by the nose, kicked, in the pillory, caned, cudged, mutilated, stabbed, beheaded, torn limb from limb; as at the whipping post, on the gallows, and even in *hell's flames!* * All these efforts

* All the pictures and placards must not be condemned. Some of them have great merit;

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of typographical patriotism, loyalty, and courage, would, were Buonaparté upon the coast, disappear like a Will-o'-the-Wisp. This noisy time-serving herd, by whose means the dangers were first brought upon the country, and who are now endeavouring to turn even its alarms to account, would be amongst the very first to seek their safety in deserting it. Let it never be forgotten, that the newspapers were, with the exception of only the Morning Chronicle, unanimous in justifying the proceedings against Mr. Peltier. On persons who act thus, who will be foolish enough to place any reliance?—There is no knowing when, or how, or where, Buonaparté means to make his attack. The probable conjecture is, that, if he attacks England this year, he will only do it by way of feint, to favour a more serious attack on Ireland. But, indeed, with respect to the movements of such an enemy, so situated, all must be mere conjecture; and, as to any confidence in the information of ministers, let those entertain it, who have never heard of the insurrection in Dublin.—We have gone on from blunder to blunder; the parliament has supinely passed over folly after folly and crime after crime; event upon event have announced the approach of a great and terrible crisis, and, at last, unless a very sudden change in men and measures takes place, that crisis will come, and the monarchy will sink beneath it. But, it is greatly to be feared that, *support the government!* or, in other words, keep the Addingtons in their places, will be the cry, even to the very moment when the very places themselves will be swept away.

THE NORTHERN POWERS appear to be disposed to take no part with us in the war. Denmark has complained of the blockade of the Elbe and the Weser, though Russia has, in some sort, approved of it. Prussia is not disposed to break with France, by whom, as was explicitly predicted in the Register, at the time of the German indemnities, she is held fast by the double tie of interest and of fear.—Prussia has, perhaps, some views upon Hanover, for herself; but, as to obtaining the evacuation of that electorate for our sakes, the thing is too ridiculous to obtain credit any where, except at the Mansion-house or the Stock Exchange.

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.—Buonaparté has, it is said, granted permission to those powers to remain *neutral*, upon condition of

but others are most scandalous, most detestable, and most disgraceful to the metropolis.

tribute of four millions from the former, and of one million and a half from the latter. That he will take care to have this paid *annually* there can be little doubt; and, when the city financiers consider, that, Buonaparté receives no payments in *bank-notes*, that one pound in France is worth four pounds in England; and, when they further consider, that in addition to the sums from Spain, Portugal, and Hanover, he receives, or at least, employs, other vast sums in Holland, Switzerland, the Italian and Ligurian republics, and the kingdom of Naples; when they consider all this, they will not be so uneasy about the pecuniary concerns of France, nor will they be surprised, that the French funds *rise*, while those of England *fall*.—When we see him thus receiving the produce of the Brazils by the way of Lisbon, and drawing the bowels of Peru and Mexico through the channel of Madrid, how feeble, how little, how inadequate to their object, how perfectly contemptible, appear all the efforts of our maritime and colonial war!

THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE is, it appears, actually taken possession of by the French.—Admiral Linois and general Decaen, who sailed out of Brest, just after the King's message, of the 8th of March, had reached France, were originally destined for the Isle of France; but, in consequence of that message, were ordered to enter the Cape, whence the French will never again be dislodged.—The loss of this place, the absolute transfer of it from England to France, will form one of the leading *articles of accusation* against the ministers; for, if they imagine to escape unaccused of these things, they are the most mistaken of mortals. Wallowing in riches and in power; beset with vile flatterers; and being themselves extremely weak and short-sighted, they have not the least idea of the consequences of their conduct, and of the fate, to which they are visibly destined. They have heard *responsibility* so long talked of, without seeing any practical effect arising from it; they have so long considered it as a mere farce, that the bolt will be ready to fall upon them, before they perceive, that the storm which is coming on is totally different from any that this island has ever before witnessed.—The consequence of surrendering the Cape to Holland they were duly apprized of, in a very few days after the *preliminaries* of peace were signed. They were told, that making it a "free port" was a shameful mockery, a scandalous insult to the understandings of the nation. "You will, my Lord, no doubt, urge, that

"the Cape is become a *free port*! Do you mean to say, that it will be open to us, in time of peace? All ports are so. Do you mean to say, that it will be equally open to us, in the event of a war with France? For my part, I am disposed to consider the term *free port*, as signifying a port that may be seized by the first power, who chooses to occupy it, and that France will be that power will very soon be proved."—* Yet they persevered, notwithstanding they would, by subsequent events, have been fully justified in refusing to fulfil this stipulation, and, indeed, notwithstanding they had, at one time, long since the ratification of the definitive treaty, actually re-occupied this most important post.

THE AMERICAN CONGRESS is summoned to meet in October (six weeks sooner than usual), for the purpose of taking into consideration the Convention lately made with France, and which it would not have been convenient to ratify, till after our treaty with America expired, which it does on the first of October. The convention between America and France does, it is suspected, contain stipulations hostile to the commercial interests of Great Britain. It would be improper to assert this, till one sees the convention itself; but, so strong are the suspicions entertained upon this subject, that it appears necessary to say something, in order to prepare the country for confirmation of them. This convention, together with all the evils that will grow out of it, are to be entirely attributed to the Treaty of Amiens. We shall now very soon see a remarkable instance of the sagacity, of the statesman-like knowledge, of Lord Hawkesbury, Mr. Addington, General Maitland, and the Master of the Rolls.

GEN. BOWLES, the Indian chief, has at last fallen again into the hands of his cowardly enemies, the Spaniards; and, from those hands, he will most assuredly fall into the grave. With this intelligent, gallant, and faithful partizan of England will perish our influence on the continent of America south of Canada. BOWLES has fallen a sacrifice to the vile intrigues and the rapacity of some of the underlings of office in London, and to the wilful deafness and blindness of the present and last administration, either of whom, if they had paid one moment's attention to his representa-

tions, might have obtained, at the expense of only a few thousands of pounds, lawful possession of that country, which France has now made the means of striking a mortal blow to our connexion with the United States of America. Louisiana might have been secured with only the fractional shillings and pence upon the sums, which Mr. Dundas and General Maitland squandered away in their wars against Toussaint.

ST. DOMINGO is closely blockaded by our ships, General Rochambeau has declared it in a state of siege; he must it is supposed, soon surrender to the blacks, or to our fleet; and, if so, the black empire, Lord Castlereagh's "frightful black empire," is again established, and that, too, by our means; by the means of that very ministry, who have, over and over again, declared, in the face of the parliament and the nation, that they would rather see a French hostile army, to any amount, in St. Domingo, than suffer the black empire to remain.

FUND AT LLOYD'S.—Coaxing advertisements and bullying paragraphs from this quarter, having lost their effect upon the public, other means have been resorted to, and those of a nature so extraordinary as to merit serious animadversion. A printed circular letter has been addressed to the magistrates, &c. &c. of the several districts in the kingdom, calling upon them to aid and assist in furthering the object of the Committee at Lloyd's; and, in order to give this proceeding the appearance of being sanctioned by the government, the letters have been *franked* by MR. FREELING, the Secretary to the General Post Office! Either the government has given this sanction, or it has not; if it has not, Mr. Freeling is certainly guilty of great abuse of office, and, if it has, then is it absolutely concerned in an act whereby money is raised upon the people, without consent of parliament.—This subject will be resumed in the next sheet.—In the mean time, it is to be hoped, that the magistrates, church-wardens, &c. &c. will be upon their guard against the trick here described.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several very valuable articles have been received. They will be perused without delay, and the greater part of them will probably appear in the double sheet, which will be published next week, or the week after.—The excellent hints respecting the conduct of Mr. Sheridan have been received.

* Cobbett's Letters to Ld. Hawkesbury on the Preliminaries of Peace: new edit. p. 59.